

Can-Do Statements

Spanish Language Arts

Grade 1



Edmonton Public Schools
Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education
2009

Can-Do Statements for Bilingual Programs

Introduction

What are the Can-Do statements?

The Can-Do statements serve as a curricular support document and assessment tool. The Can-Do statements align with grade level outcomes from the Spanish Language Arts program of studies for bilingual programs, beginning in Kindergarten. The Can-Do statements are self-assessment statements regarding what students are able to do in Spanish in each grade.

The Can-Do statements are designed to help stakeholders classroom understand how language proficiency will progress over time in bilingual programs.

The skill areas assessed in the Can-Do statements include:

- speaking and representing
- writing
- listening
- reading
- viewing
- researching and reporting information

The Can-Do statements are student-centred and intended to be a self-assessment tool. Students use the Can-Do statements to consider the quality of their own work and indicate, to the best of their ability, how well they are performing in relation to grade level expectations.

How were the Can-Do statements created?

The Can-Do statements were written in the Curriculum department of Edmonton Public Schools and were piloted in Language Arts in bilingual programs offered within the district. Participating teachers applied Can-Do statements in their classrooms and provided feedback to create this curricular support document.

The creation of the Can-Do statements was informed primarily by the work of the European Language Portfolio. The Council of Europe has articulated a European Framework with common reference levels in regards to language proficiency.

The levels of proficiency are displayed on the next page.

European Proficiency Levels:

Proficient	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
User	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
User	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
User	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Source: <http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/>

In the future, Can-Do statements for bilingual programs will be calibrated towards the European Council Levels of Proficiency.

Why use the Can-Do statements?

The Can-Do statements help provide a record of linguistic skills a student has acquired.

Teachers use the Can-Do statements to plan and implement the Spanish Language Arts program of studies. The statements can also be used as a source of information regarding student achievement.

To obtain a complete picture of student assessment and performance, a teachers' judgment regarding achievement and performance must be considered. The Can-Do statements represent one type of information to contribute to a teacher's body of assessment evidence. This body of evidence is used to make overall judgments regarding student achievement and performance. The Can-Do statements are not intended to replace other methods of assessment or evaluation. They are complementary to other methods of assessment the Spanish teacher uses.

The Can-Do statements motivate students by allowing them to reflect on their successes in learning Spanish, and to set personal learning goals.

Stakeholders outside the classroom, such as parents, school administrators and school trustees, can use the Can-Do statements to help them understand the common expectations regarding what students can do in Spanish at each grade level.

When are the Can-Do statements used?

The Can-Do statements can be used at any time in the school year. Teachers are encouraged to lead students through a process of regularly reflecting on the quality of their work at different points of instruction.

A Teacher's Guide to using the Can-Do statements has been included in this document. It includes several ideas for implementing the Can-Do statements in a bilingual classroom.

Teacher Guide: Using the Can-Do Statements

Spanish Language Arts teachers in bilingual programs in Edmonton Public Schools piloted the Can-Do statements in their classrooms over the period of several months. This Teacher Guide for using the Can-Do statements is the result of suggestions, ideas and recommendations by the teachers involved in the pilot.

"I was impressed...the students were pretty accurate in how they assessed themselves."

"The students enjoyed interacting with one another. They worked very hard to use the target language. I didn't think it would work as well as it did."

"This boosts their confidence. The students take ownership."

"It gave the students confidence and focused their attention on what they need to improve. "

"It's good for parents to know what has been accomplished."

"It provides good motivation to stay in the bilingual program and shows students the importance of learning."

"You will all achieve this. Everywhere you look, it's success. I will prepare more things like this- it's all so simple and easy!"

-comments from Language Arts teachers in bilingual program after piloting the Can-Do statements in their classrooms

Beginning to use the Can-Do statements

The Can-Do statements are used in Language Arts for bilingual program classrooms with teacher guidance.



Strategies to consider:

- The Can-Do statements are not intended to be addressed in any particular order. Therefore, begin with any Can-Do statement from any of the skill sections
- The Can-Do statements can be used at any point in the school year, and at any point of instruction. Some Can-Do statements might be completed easily in a class, while others may involve more time-consuming project work
- One Can-Do statement may be revisited several times in a school year, and others only addressed once
- If possible, plan the use of Can-Do statements with a colleague
- Begin to train students to self-reflect honestly about the quality of their work. Peer-assessment is often an effective way for students to learn to provide feedback objectively regarding the quality of work

Presenting the Can-Do statements to students

Since the Can-Do statements are student-centered and intended for self-assessment, the Can-Do statements should be easy for students to use.



Strategies to consider:

- Provide the Can-Do statements to students at the beginning of the year in a booklet. Ask students to periodically address Can-Do statements in their booklets
- Present the Can-Do statements individually as they are addressed through instruction
- Post relevant Can-Do statements in the classroom, and refer to them when appropriate

- Explain the Can-Do statement to students if necessary

Using Can-Do statements as an Instructional Tool

Addressing the Can-Do statements does not have to be an added responsibility to a teacher's regular instructional responsibilities. Addressing Can-Do statements can become an integral part of planning and instruction.



Strategies to consider:

- Break down more complex Can-Do statements into further criteria statements.

For example, in a grade two Mandarin Language Arts bilingual class, to address the Can-Do statement "*I can write a very short story using simple, complete sentences and pictures*" the teacher used the following criteria statements:

- ☐ I can use simple sentences in my story
- ☐ I can use complete sentences in my story
- ☐ I can draw pictures for my story
- ☐ I can read over my story and make corrections when I am done
- ☐ I think my story is interesting

Students used these criteria statements to help assess overall whether they had achieved the original Can-Do statement.

- Set criteria with students
- Use Can-Do statements to begin discussions. For example, "What are the characteristics of good writing?"
- Collect (anonymous) exemplars of student work in relation to a Can-Do statement, and ask students to articulate how different exemplars present a "can-do" or a "cannot yet..." Record students ideas and use for future reference before beginning similar types of work
- Cluster together different Can-Do statements when working on a longer-term project
- Use sentence starters, model statements, structured activities, brainstorming techniques and graphic organizers to help facilitate Can-Do statements that related to speaking and writing

- Provide specific feedback to students regarding their work based on information gathered through addressing a Can-Do statement

Using the Can-Do statements to report student achievement

Can-Do statements can be used to assist teachers in recording and reporting student achievement as it relates to outcomes from the program of studies.



Strategies to consider:

- Use the wording of Can-Do statements in report card comments
- Use the Can-Do statements to create short-term and long-term plans. These plans, using the Can-Do statements, could be shared with students and parents at the beginning of a reporting period
- Consider students' self-assessment information gathered from Can-Do statements to determine Grade Level of Achievement (GLA)
- Use as ongoing diagnostic tool
- Use Can-Do statements as a springboard for discussion in student-led conferences
- Display student work with Can-Do statements so students and visitors to the classroom will understand the overall purpose of the work
- Send home Can-Do statements at regular intervals so parents and other partners in learning can help monitor students' progress
- Include Can-Do statements as part of an assessment body of evidence, complementary to other types of assessments currently used



Common questions regarding the Can-Do statements

How are the Student Copy and Teacher Copy different?

The student copy of the Can-Do statements features titles in age-appropriate language, each Can-Do statement, and three columns in which students can indicate whether they think they can achieve the Can-Do statement independently, with assistance or cannot yet achieve the Can-Do statement.

A sample of the student copy (grades 2-6) appears on the next page:

When I use Spanish to **talk** or to **show** something to others...

	by myself	with help	not yet
			
I can use words I have practiced to talk about myself and topics I know well			
I can greet different kinds of people			

The teacher copy of the Can-Do statements features titles indicating which skills from the program of studies the selected outcomes address. There are three columns featured in the teacher copy:

- the first column shows which outcomes have been selected
- the second column shows the Can-Do statement that has been created from the selected outcomes
- the third column shows potential activities teachers could use in the classroom to help facilitate the Can-Do statement

A sample of the teacher copy appears as follows:

*Can-Do statements related primarily to **speaking** and/or **representing**:*

Outcome(s) from the Program of Studies addressed	Indicators that students can do what the Program of Studies specifies	Students can demonstrate when the following sample activities are facilitated in the classroom:
1.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.2, 6.5.3	I can use words I have practiced to talk about myself and topics I know well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show and Tell ▪ Simple oral presentation about families or personal interests
5.2.3, 6.3.1, 6.3.4	I can greet different kinds of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greeting a guest to the classroom ▪ Turn and talk to a classmate ▪ Introducing the teacher to parents at Meet-the-Teacher evening

Can I change the Can-Do statements?

The Can-Do statements have been specifically designed to address a group of outcomes and to reflect the intent of certain specific and general outcomes. If the Can-Do outcome is changed, then it is possible the intent of one or more of the

outcomes will not be met. It is the teacher's responsibility to know which outcomes are intended to be addressed.

There are several ways in which teachers can 'customize' the Can-Do statement document to fit their needs, without altering the statements themselves.

Teachers may want to create their own "Can-Do" statements, based on their own interpretation of an outcome, or of a cluster of outcomes.



Strategies to consider:

- Change the self-assessment format for students. Perhaps it would be more helpful in some cases to have room for students to write their self-reflections with each Can-Do statement. (For example, after a student's self-reflection, the sentence prompt "*I know this because...*" could be added) Alterations can be made to the visual presentation of the Can-Do statements to meet different needs.
- Use the third column in the teacher copy of the Can-Do statements to record individual preferences for instructional activities
- Create Can-Do statements based on outcomes individually or with colleagues to help plan for instruction, and to complement the current Can-Do statements

If students indicate that they can do something "with help" does it mean they are not achieving at grade level?

Teachers use their professional judgment to determine whether or not students have achieved outcomes from the program of studies. In most cases, it is perfectly acceptable for students to require support in completing language tasks.

Several outcomes from the program of studies indicate that students are expected to achieve the outcome "with guidance." Therefore, students who indicate they can achieve these outcomes "independently" would be achieving above their grade level.

The most important point to remember about the Can-Do statements is that they are intended for student self-assessment. Therefore, students need to be coached to honestly self-reflect on their own work.

Why are there some outcomes missing from the Can-Do statements?

The Can-Do statements focus on the students' use of Spanish. Some outcomes in the program of studies, such as those found in General Outcome 7, are

concerned with culture. It is not always necessary to address these outcomes in the target language. Some of these outcomes may have been selected to be clustered with other outcomes that relate directly to the use of Spanish in the Can-Do statements.

Why are there not more grammar and vocabulary outcomes addressed in the Can-Do statements?

It is assumed that whenever students use target language in the classroom that they are addressing grammatical elements and vocabulary. The underlying assumption of the Can-Do statements is that grammatical elements and vocabulary are used to support the task and are not the main focus of communication.

Why are the Can-Do statements written in English, and not in Spanish?

The Can-Do statements and documents have been written in English to ensure that all interested stakeholders are able to fully understand the documents.

It may be possible for teachers to translate the Can-Do statements into Spanish when they are convinced students are able to understand and use them in Spanish. Until that point, however, they should remain in English, if students are more comfortable using them in English.

“It is very difficult for students to achieve a learning goal unless they understand that goal and can assess what they need to do to reach it. So self-assessment is essential to learning.”

Assessment for Learning: putting it into practice. (2003). Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam.

**Can-Do Grade 1
(Spanish Language Arts)**

Reading/Viewing

Outcome(s) from the Program of Studies addressed	Indicators that students can do what the Program of Studies specifies	Students can demonstrate when the following activities are facilitated in the classroom:
1.2.4, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 6.2.3	I can read simple poems, songs and stories along with my teacher and classmates	
2.1.3, 2.1.4, 6.2.3, 6.5.2	I can read and understand words and sentences I know	
2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 3.2.4, 6.1.1, 6.2.5	I guess things about a story by reading some words and looking at the pictures	
2.1.4, 2.3.3, 6.1.1	I can reads some new words and know what they mean	
1.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 5.1.3	I can find things in a story that I know about	

**Can-Do Grade 1
(Spanish Language Arts)**

Writing/Representing

Outcome(s) from the Program of Studies addressed	Indicators that students can do what the Program of Studies specifies	Students can demonstrate when the following activities are facilitated in the classroom:
2.2.3, 5.1.3, 6.2.6	I can draw a picture about my feelings about a character from a story.	
1.1.3, 2.3.5,	I can draw and label a picture about something I know well	
6.1.1, 6.2.4, 6.5.3	I can write simple words and sentences with my teacher's help	
4.2.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 6.1.4, 6.5.3	I can make changes to my writing with my teacher's help	
1.1.3, 4.1.2, 4.2.5	I can write simple sentences and draw pictures about my feelings or things I know.	
1.1.5, 6.4.2	I can share my ideas for a class writing activity.	

**Can-Do Grade 1
(Spanish Language Arts)**

Speaking/Representing

Outcome(s) from the Program of Studies addressed	Indicators that students can do what the Program of Studies specifies	Students can demonstrate when the following activities are facilitated in the classroom:
1.1.1, 1.2.2, 4.4.2, 5.1.1, , 6.1.2, 6.2.2, 6.5.3	I can use words I know to say something about myself and my family.	During “Student of the Week” students share their name and age. Students prepare a family tree.
5.2.3, 6.1.2, 6.2.2, 6.3.1, 6.3.4, 6.3.5, 6.4.3, 6.5.1	I can greet classmates and teachers.	
1.1.1, 2.2.3, 5.1.1, 6.2.2	I can tell someone how I am feeling.	
3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.2.2, 5.2.1	I can ask simple questions about something I am interested in.	Participate in a class brainstorm
1.1.4, 2.2.1, 5.1.3, 6.2.2	I can say what poem, song, story or book I like.	Share a book with classmates
1.1.5, 2.2.2, 2.3.3, 3.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.4, 4.4.1, 6.2.6	I can make or draw something and tell someone about it.	Students provide a simple description about a picture they have drawn e.g., “This is a cat”, “This is my family”, “That is my house”.
4.2.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 6.1.2, 6.3.4, 6.4.3	I can talk about something my classmate has done.	Students comment on other’s work in an art display using rehearsed/familiar phrases such as “That is pretty”, “That is colourful”, “I like that”.
4.2.2, 5.2.4, 6.2.2, 6.5.3	I can tell someone when I don’t understand.	
6.4.1	I can use actions to help me say something.	
2.3.4, 6.4.1	I can say a short poem.	

**Can-Do Grade 1
(Spanish Language Arts)**

Listening/Viewing

Outcome(s) from the Program of Studies addressed	Indicators that students can do what the Program of Studies specifies	Students can demonstrate when the following activities are facilitated in the classroom:
1.2.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.3.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.5, 6.5.2	I can watch a short, simple video and answer questions about what I have seen	
1.2.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.3.2, 5.1.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.5, 6.5.2	I can listen to a story and answer questions about what I have heard	Draw beginning, middle, end of a story
2.2.1, 2.2.3, 6.2.1	I can listen to or view a story and share how it makes me feel	Draw and label a picture to describe feelings evoked by a story
3.2.5, 6.2.1, 6.2.5, 6.5.2	I can guess what a story will be about by looking at pictures and listening to the title	
2.1.1, 4.4.3, 6.2.5, 7.1.1, 7.2.1, 7.2.2	I can watch and listen to a Spanish performance and draw and label a picture about it	
2.1.4, 3.1.4, 6.2.1, 6.3.3, 6.5.1, 6.5.2	I can understand and follow my teacher's directions in class	
2.1.1, 2.1.4, 6.2.1, 6.3.3, 6.5.2	I can understand my classmates when they talk about themselves	
4.4.3, 6.2.1, 6.4.1	I can be a good listener in class	
2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.3.4, 6.2.1, 6.5.2	I can listen to songs, poems and stories with my classmates	Students listen to a Spanish song and follow the teacher to learn the actions

When I **read** Spanish...

I can read simple poems, songs and stories along with my teacher and classmates

I can read and understand words and sentences I know

I can find things in a story that I know about

I can read some new words and know what they mean

I guess things about a story by reading some words and looking at the pictures



When I **write** in Spanish...

I can draw a picture about my feelings about a character from a story

I can write simple sentences and draw pictures about my feelings or things I know

I can draw and label a picture about something I know well

I can write simple words and sentences with my teacher's help

I can make changes to my writing with my teacher's help

I can share my ideas for a class writing activity



When I use Spanish to **talk** or to **show** something to others...



When I listen, watch or look at something in Spanish...

